

The Printers PROPOSALS

For a Regulation of the P R E S S.

I.  H A T all Printing Presses be Register'd, with the Names and Places of Abode of the Proprietors thereof, and all the Rooms wherein such Presses are set up; this to be repeated as often as any Press shall be removed out of one Room into another, or the Interest thereof transferred to the Use of any other Person, and not one Sheet to be Printed off till such Registry be first made, under the Penalty of

II. That every Printer shall have a particular Mark to be register'd also with his Name and Presses; which said Mark he shall always be obliged to Print visibly at the Bottom of the first Page of every Sheet or Half Sheet by him Printed, under the Penalty of

III. That all Title Pages shall contain some Register'd Printer's Name, and Place of Abode, with the Year when Printed, under the Penalty of

And if any thing Printed after without such Name and Mark in the Title Page, and also the proper Mark or Marks of every other Printer in all other Sheets thereof, placed as is before directed, (though such Papers or Books be otherwise never so inoffensive) shall be found in the Custody of any Person whatsoever, either for Sale, or to be given away, or kept for private Use, it shall be at the Liberty of any Person seeing the same, to seize and carry away such Paper or Papers, Book or Books, or Parts of Books, and deliver them to the next Justice of Peace, and not only be exempted from any Action or Actions, but also receive for so doing, a Reward of to be levied on the Person in whose Custody such Goods shall be so found, who shall also be further liable to all the Penalties of this Act, unless he shall discover the Person from whom he had them. And if it be pretended by the Persons on whom such Seizure is made, that the Papers were Printed before the Commencement of this Act, let them be obliged to make out the Truth of such Allegation sufficiently testified on Oath, within Days, or otherwise the said Justice to cause the said Papers or Books to be burnt or destroyed.

IV. That every Printer over and above the Penalties of this Act, shall be subject and liable to all other Prosecutions for any thing offensive contained in whatsoever Sheet, or part of a Sheet he shall Print, with his Mark or without, unless he shall discover the Author, or the Party from whom he had the Copy.

V. That every Person who shall presume to counterfeit or make use of the Mark or Name of any other Printer, shall be guilty of and all Persons accessory to such a Cheat, liable to the same Punishment, except the first Discoverer.

VI. That no Persons be admitted to Register any Printing Presses or Presses, nor be taken into Copartnership with, or have any Interest in or Title to any such Register, or the Benefit thereof; but such only as themselves have, or are the Widows or Children of such as have served Seven Years Apprenticeship to the Art of Printing.

N. B. Most of the Papers lately Publish'd, which have given Offence, were Printed by such as have not serv'd an Apprenticeship to the Art of Printing, tho' they keep Printing Presses.

The First Article prevents all Private Presses.

And the Second discovers the Printer of every Sheet, though a Book should be divided among many Printers, as is sometimes practis'd.

The Third suppresses the Publication of all Treason, Sedition, or Scandal, which will be the only things attested to be clandestinely Printed, and consequently prevents the Printing thereof; for no Person will print what cannot be dispersed, nor will any one receive what cannot be safely kept in his Custody.

And then the Fourth Article will be a sufficient Caution to all Printers to be careful of what they undertake to Print, and for whom; when the Publication will be so difficult, and the Means of discovering so easie.

The Fifth Article will prevent an innocent Person suffering for the Faults of another's Forgery.

All which is Humbly submitted to the Consideration of this HONOURABLE HOUSE, by the PRINTERS of LONDON; who as they are willing and desirous a Stop should be put to the Publication of all Papers or Books that may be offensive; so they humbly hope and beseech your HONOURS, that if by these Proposals the Evils of the PRESS shall be prevented, they may be permitted the innocent Exercise of their Callings; without being obliged to Print the Name of the AUTHOR in the Title Page of every Book, which will very much discourage the Publication of many excellent Treatises, through the excess of Modesty in some, who will rather stifle their Performances, than suffer their Names to appear in Print, though to a Work deserving the greatest Applause; for instance, the Works of the AUTHOR of The Whole Duty of Man, &c. And on the other hand, some very good Books will be lessened in the Esteem of many Readers, through a Prejudice to its AUTHOR, both which will be very prejudicial to them, and they hope your HONOURS will not think it necessary to be insisted on. Nor are they without Grounds enclined to believe that your HONOURS will please to desist from further loading them with the intended Duty of Stamps on all Pamphlets, when you shall be satisfied it can by no Means raise any Advantage to the CROWN, but only suppress the Printing of all such small Tracts; many of which if Printed and Sold at a reasonable Price, might be of great use to the Publick.